The miners' strike has been defeated, not by the strength of the state so much as by reformist trade unions, which has forgotten how to fight.

The members of other unions could not render practical industrial assistance to the miners due to the very structure of the unions they are in. Trade unions have been emasculated by 100 years of bowing to legality, bowing to the Labour Party, bowing to arbitration and conciliation, rather than fighting.

Faced with a resolute Tory government they are powerless. From 1979—1983 the TUC hung around waiting for their "pals" in the Labour Party to be elected. When that didn't happen they hadn't a clue what to do.

The unions have shown their weakness and it has been noted by the Tories during the miners' strike. Now it will be the turn of the teachers, healthworkers, dockers, railworkers, etc, and they will all be picked off one by one, their huge fortunes sequestered, their actions ended by the waving of a writ.

UNLESS workers organise inside their unions in rank-and-file groups, independent of all parties, contemptuous of the law and committed to direct action and solidarity, if this is done they can begin to turn the tide.

It is the only realistic option.
Most people have very definite views on the nuclear issue. There is much public debate between those who want to get rid of nuclear weapons and those who prefer to see them as a means of deterring aggression. However, the two broad bodies of opinion do share a common believes — very significant one.

MINING DISPUTE: FIGHTING ON THE JOB

Despite the strike being called off, all the issues remain. Pit closures, job losses, low wages and throw workers on the scrapheap. How is it possible that the 700 plus miners sacked and victimised by the MBG will not have to be compensated?

We owe it to them and to Joe Green and David Jones who died for the strike, to continue our fight at all times, to continue fighting.

The strike lasted long and remained so solid is a tribute to the determination and bravery of the miners, a strike may have been lost but the struggle goes on, change our tactics but not our principles. The fight must now continue, the pit, so that the battle to keep them open and the communities intact is won.

The return to the pits of a mass of militant workers committed to the destruction of the MBG's plans is a tactic the government fears. A policy of go-slow, disruption, work-to-rule and the insertion of snipers to machine linked with snap wildcat strikes of particular sections or trades is a realistic even in pits where it is only partially active. Such a strategy embraces not only those who have stayed off strike for its full duration, but also those who have returned, driven by hardship and in shame, in the dying weeks of the strike. Obviously choices we are different from the hardline political scale. We cannot unite the union and defend the division and humiliation. Thatcher has tried to create.

COCA-COLA BOYCOTT

The Coca-Cola boycott (see LA 22) until the workers at the company's Guatemala plant get their recognition and job security. These workers are literally fighting for their lives — officials of SEBAG, their union, have been imprisoned or tortured. Support for the boycott can help them win.

BACK & CONFERENCE

will be held at Kellingly miners' works on 20-21 April 1983. Overnight accommodation will be available if necessary.

WARRIORS STILL OUT

The TW (Industrial Workers of the World) have been out since October 25th. The strikers faced by scabs armed with iron bars and local cops out for the workers. Keller Strike Fund, IWW, Box 183, New York 10023.

WORKSHOPS TO INCLUDE:

- Miners' strike
- Blacklisting & the police
- Welfare State

For further information, etc., contact the TW, P.O. Box 183, New York 10023.

SPONSORED BY:

- Socialist Federation
- Communist Party
- NUM Kellingly
- NUM Nuneaton
- NUM Tamworth
- NUS
- NSEW
- NAFU
- NCTU
- NUT
- NALGO
- NUTGSO
- NUT
- NUS
- NUS
- NUS
- NUS
- NUS

THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT!

Of course this strike could have been won, but for the betrayal. Their promises of solidarity were empty. Many miners made no real effort to organise effective industrial action. The most that could be done was to convince rank-and-file unionists to prevent their own unions from attack as well as the NUM. We cannot depend on the NUM to do other than sell us out, and sabotage any efforts to build solidarity. At the anti-rate-capping demo in London on March 6th, Norman Willis, NUM leader, ran away from angry miners and anarchists, and into the protective arms of the police. This kind of questioning, whether just or not, left the miners strength.

We have to win this battle last in the world, not on the boardrooms of the NUM nor the House of Commons, but through the benevolent offices of ACAS.

COAL-QUELL BOYCOTT

The Coke boycott continues (see LA 22) until the workers at the company's Guatemala plant get their recognition and job security. These workers are literally fighting for their lives — officials of SEBAG, their union, have been imprisoned or tortured. Support for the boycott can help them win.
There are few modern French writers and philosophers as well known as Albert Camus (1913-1960). The Penguin editions of his novels are exceptionally widely available, and books such as The Fall and The Outsider have had a significant influence on contemporary youth. What is less well-known here in Britain is his political commitment which evolved toward socialism.

Unlike many of the French left-wing intellectuals, Camus came from a strictly working-class background—the Belcourt district of Algiers, vividly evoked in L'Étranger and The Outsider. As he wrote in 1955, "Almost all French writers who today pretend to speak in the name of the proletariat were 'wise men' or well-to-do parents."

Was he a deprived childhood? The sun and the sea were free, but it did not take long for the atmosphere to become so stifling that only a few could stand it. This is why the help of teachers was essential when I went to see my uncle. At home objects did not move, the soup plate, the pot on the mantelpiece, etc. At his house: theY were moved, even exchanged. I acquired Quinper service, etc. I woke to the idea of choice."

The time after the Liberation saw a period of hope that the left—syndicalist, but also communist—would occupy the Soviet Union. Only a few others have made this clear. As syndicalists we see the socialist idea and the Left as a symbol of collective action.
**WHEN POVERTY IS THEIR ALLY...**

Like the other infectious diseases of childhood, whooping cough has been in decline for the past 20 years. Its prevalence is cyclic, with peaks just under four years apart, the last of these was in 1978. The BHSS and the medical profession have reacted with repeated exhortations to parents to have their children vaccinated: the vaccination rate has declined since 1974, to about 35 per cent. It is understandable to expect their children to be vaccinated if, as is generally agreed, whooping cough is an unpleasant disease at any age, but it is particularly dangerous for babies in their first year. In fact, most deaths are among infants under 1 year old — most often death happens around 50 days. The incidence of permanent brain damage from the disease — about one in 300,000 cases — is believed to be about the same as the incidence of brain damage caused by vaccination.

However, vaccination would not necessarily protect these children. In the 1979 epidemic, Swedish doctors notified a similar rate of cases to their colleagues in England and Wales. However, there were no deaths, whereas we had 27. There has been no death due to whooping cough in Sweden since 1978, yet this was the year vaccinations ceased.

Comparison of mortality rates between social groups within countries, shows a characteristic association between low income and high mortality is strongest for infants under the age of five.

In the third world diarrhoea and measles — conditions that usually take a mild course here — are fatal to millions of babies. The differences in diet, social and environmental conditions that produce the contrast between affluent northern countries and the poor south is the result of an obvious step in the progress that differentiates Sweden from Britain, and their patterns of whooping cough mortality.

By emphasizing the importance of vaccination, the media deflects attention from the factors that underlie the growing severity of infectious diseases — all are now increasing. Medical intervention can offer little other than hope against social forces. At times of stress in the social fabric, our old enemies the infectious diseases seize their opportunity, and emerge once more, with poverty as their ally.

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**AIR SICKNESS: THEIR WELFARE**

The miners' strike has highlighted some of the most unsavoury aspects of the social security system. The 1975 Social Security Act laid down that anybody who is unable to work because of a trade dispute at their workplace will not be entitled to receive Unemployment Benefit. Partners of strikers can claim Supplementary Benefit, but the assessment of their claim will take into account a reduction of assumed strike pay. This provision is a thinly disguised form of financial punishment for the families of people who go on strike. In 1978, £18 million was paid in strike pay, and the amount was raised from £75 to £160 during the miners' strike. Even after the sequestration of NUM funds, striking miners were “assumed” to be receiving strike pay.

The myth of picketers being paid handsome sums was spread by the government's Fleet Street publicists — a move doubtless meant to detract from the indignation common. The regulations applying to those involved in trade disputes even extend to those who, by their actions, identify with strikers — for example, by agreeing to the requests of pickets, or to whose whose actions identify with pickets, or whose strike pay at all, for the whole time the strike ends the next day.

The Social Security system, held up as an advantage of the “welfare state,” is another part, like any other legislation, in maintaining the welfare of the state.

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**The real killer — CANCER or CAPITALISM?**

Meanwhile, we’ve all witnessed the publicity over the case of cervical cancer, which has not always been a large number of women and that the service should no longer be available on the NHS. Instead of advocating that women pay for tests — about £700 every two years, the health service, with little chance of giving the disease a chance, in the prime of life.

For treatment seems to be of no concern to him. It certainly didn’t seem to be of concern to those who had no feelings on the matter that less money was lavished on expenditure for arms or police, whereas “would be less trouble affordable treatments to prevent the needless deaths of women still in the prime of life.”

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**Total Amnesty**

We must not forget the miners in prison. Only industrial direct action will free them; until then, prisoners can be adopted by IAI. Awaiting the full report, we have 75 prisoners available for a S.A.E. More next issue on this.
SAAWU-fighting union of S AFRICA

The social struggle in S Africa has recently intensified as workers are challenging the state via the union action of the SAAWU rather than via guerrilla struggle which is only played out in the optical illusions (eg. las babби,Nicaragua). SAAWU has contacted the IWA (the World Workers' Federation, Madrid).

In response this has formed a South African commission in New York.

SAAWU, which has its main base in London, is the fastest growing of the unregistered independent trade unions in South Africa. It refuses to register under the government's labour legislation. According to its spokesperson: "We believe that if we go and register, we will be embroiled in all those bureaucratic laws which amount to a genocide against the working class, and the black worker in particular."

In August 1982, concerned at the powerlessness of unregistered unions, the South African government decided to "turn off" the unions by forming "established channels" by permitting unregistered unions to form "affiliation committees" and arbitration machinery. But SAAWU, whose membership has involved no one with government-created committees.

Its tactics are to build organisation and awareness by taking up the most pressing problems facing particular groups of workers that work shop floor. When it has the support of 5% of the workers it starts collective bargaining, directly with the management. As SAAWU begins to become better organised, they sometimes decide not to have their own "sub-unions" or affiliates of SAAWU. SAAWU itself is thus a general federation of the black unions but it is also an umbrella organisation for the councils of workers such as the Chemical & Allied Workers' Union, the Road-Sea Workers' Union, and the South African Blind Workers' Union.

SAAWU emphasises the importance of active mass participation in the decisions that workers make, deciding themselves at mass meetings, not being forced by the top." These are the principles that the black unions in South Africa are trying to build around. SAAWU was formed in November 1979, as an oral union movement. It is a political union. It is the first action to organise the SAAWU. Originally asked by his supporters to join SLOMR, the South African Blind Workers' Union, the SAAWU's young trade unionist was blacklisted and thrown out by the SLOMR. But it points out that the black workers are black, its policies are black, and its leadership is black.

One of the most persecuted men in South Africa today, the softly-spoken but highly articulate Thozamile Gqweta has two sets of torturers: the South African security police and their hirelings, the powerful G. S. O. C., his official "homenland". What bothers the authorities, and has led to the "suppressed onslaught" on him (as the increasingly self-confident Band Daily Mail put it) is Thozamile Gqweta's work in organising the SAAWU. Originally asked by his supporters to join SLOMR, the South African Blind Workers' Union, he was blacklisted and thrown out by the SLOMR. But it points out that the black workers are black, its policies are black, and its leadership is black.

The South African government has announced that it will start to register independent unions, even those of the unregistered independent workers who have won their right to strike, against government repression. SAAWU's success and Gqweta's "cheeky" union will stamp him out of the "established channels" by the government's labour legislation.

The SAAWU movement was formed in response to the "unprecedented onslaught" on him (as the increasingly self-confident Band Daily Mail put it) is Thozamile Gqweta's work in organising the SAAWU. Originally asked by his supporters to join SLOMR, the South African Blind Workers' Union, he was blacklisted and thrown out by the SLOMR. But it points out that the black workers are black, its policies are black, and its leadership is black.

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SYNDICALISM & THE MINERS

CONCLUDING LAST MONTH'S ARTICLE

Last month we saw how the syndicalist idea of rank and file union control, solidarity and direct action influenced the miners (especially in South Wales) in their struggle with the owners. NOW MINERS' NEXT STEP!

 Syndicalist ideas received further publicity with the publication of "MINERS' NEXT STEP" by the South Wales Unofficial Reform Committee in 1911. It attacked the conciliatory nature of the South Wales Miners' Federation and its bureaucracy: "The possession of power inevitably leads to corruption...in spite of good intentions." The pamphlet argued for the abolition of full-time union officials in favour of control by a self-reliant rank-and-file headed by direct action methods, and conciliation, they advocated, should be obtained through direct action methods, and instead of several cent-per-cent unionism, they put forward the idea of 'voting in solidarity and direct action to win the world for the workers.'

This article led to Tom Mann's formation of a group of the Syndicalists to be imprisoned under the Treason Act. Their six-month sentence, and one activist of the time, "made syndicalism a household word in Britain".

In any case, the mobilisation was not met by violence from the miners simply because the issue of a minimum wage was so popular that there was no danger of scabbing. As the miners argued, the union full-timers who, in spite of their theories to the contrary, had accepted a government formula which offered the "principle" of a minimum wage but not the reality. A majority of the miners ignored the call to return to work, especially in the areas most influenced by syndicalist ideas. Pits in Northumberland and Durham declared that any settlement must include the release of the syndicalist prisoners, Bowmen and Mann, while Yorkshire miners called on transport workers to join the strike and widen the struggle. Yorkshire full-timer Herbert Smith, at a rally during the strike, warned that sympathetic action would amount to revolution. Hecklers reflected, from the perspective of the working class, that this was the best thing that could happen.

STRIKE ACTION

As a result of this vigorous propaganda, and further attacks on miners' living standards, there was a ballot of 445,801 to 115,929 in favour of striking for a minimum wage in February 1912.

In response to this militant movement, the authorities had to deploy troops in the coalfields. Some units were sent to South Wales, where they were even issued with swords in case of hand-to-hand fighting, and miners' families were strengthened by the state. It was so popular that there was a ballot of 445,801 to 115,929 in favor of striking for a minimum wage. In doing so, 1,500,000 workers were affected, making it the largest strike in world history.

Don't Shoot!

The Industrial Syndicalist Education League attempted to counter the mine owners' terrorist force with a bid to subvert the army. Fred Bower, a stone-mason, published a leaflet, "Don't Shoot!" which was reprinted by Jim Jarkin in the "Trish Worker" and in the IWW's "The Syndicalist" as "argued for soldiers to side with the syndicalists and not their officers: 'The idle Rich Class, who own and order you about, have nothing to do with the working class'about also. They own everything you don't have. When we kick you order them to murder us. When you kick you order them to hearten and the cells. Instead of fighting away, each should go out to win the world for the workers.'

At Featherstone, Rotherham and Middlemarch, miners' votes had been more influential than those of all union officials. At Dimlington pit an unofficial strike was launched, demanding regular recall of officials and conciliation, rather than form a breakaway union. Despite their comparatively low rank, many workers realised the value of international unity, as well as the miners, and the value of industrial solidarity, as the miners, the other hand, had always laid great emphasis on anti-militarist propaganda.

The durability of organised syndicalism among the miners was also lessened by the fact that syndicalist miners sought to revolutionise the existing, corrupt miners' federation, rather than form a breakaway revolutionary union of their own. During the same period, the Miners' Federation, with a majority of 6,000,000 members, and the Industrial Workers of the World, numbering 500,000. In both cases, syndicalism was extinguished along with the trade union movement. Britain syndicalists never formed lasting union structures. A third factor in the demise of large-scale syndicalism at this time was the false image of success of the Russian Revolution. Many syndicalists joined the Communist Party under the illusion that the political actions of the Bolsheviks had won socialism, rather than the revolution, as the miners had in fact created. Mistakenly, they put their faith in new leaders from outside their class instead of relying on their own strength.

THE RELEVANCE OF SYNDICALISM

Although organised syndicalism was extinguished among miners by the 1920s, many of the ideas that constituted it have persisted, for example, direct action, opposition to full-time office-bearers, and the concept of rank-and-file control. In the aftermath of the 1945 anti-war strikes, the Miners' Federation was formed, which sought to organise syndicalists. The union decided to support strike action, opposition to full-time office-bearers, and the concept of rank-and-file control. The miners, who had only recently been on strike for a year—over three months' pay. The miners now resorted to
Dear Direct Action,
The Edouard Dubois letter (DA 22) makes some interesting points that working-class power lies at the point of production; that unemployment is power less; that the only sanction we have is to withdraw our labour; and that in the final analysis "syndicalism" is "the power to withdraw their labour". The strike in only one of the weapons we have in the struggle against state and private capital.

The Unione Sindacale Italiana sees the non-cooperation methods of union tradition like the strike, self-reduction of hours, and of speeds, are in large part unuseable and have lost their effect because of "place conflict", and believes a greater effort to bring things up to date is necessary, as well as the rediscovery of forms of struggle traditionally abandoned by (Italian) reformist unions such as the rigid application of rules and practices, slowdown of production and non-programmed assemblies with the impromptu suspension of work; all as the use of various forms of disorganization like the sit-down occupation of premises.

I am trying to give up the "official" form of organisation and to encourage the unemployed and the working class to help themselves become more productive, creating projects and viable enterprises, which can be subject in our English universities, not just one, employed people with the most to gain, who have no future, these are the people with the most to gain. The system wants us as consumers but not as producers. As the authors of "The Future Is Ours" say: "we must organise ourselves in a new social order by occupying the space prepared for us by the failure of the left and the triumph of the bosses. We must fill it. We must develop methods to help organised the unemployed, creating projects controlled by the workers while organizing the struggle against the bosses for the control of the means of production. Almost everywhere it is possible to find alternative examples of direct action, where small, collectives involved in resistant activities, in farming and craft industries, in agriculture, and in education, the users of these groups in the west at least, are already consciously libertarian or anarchist. The key question is to be: and for all.

What most I want to dispute is that the working class, the third and others, that members of this underclass are "powerless". The Edouard Dubois letter (DA 22) makes some interesting points: that working-class power lies at the point of production; that unemployment is power less; that the only sanction we have is to withdraw our labour; and that in the final analysis "syndicalism" is "the power to withdraw their labour". The strike in only one of the weapons we have in the struggle against state and private capital.

I also enclose a donation of £1 and a stamped addressed envelope. Best wishes,

Brian Bamford, Rochdale
The government intends to pass on the cost of the miners' strike to the consumers, through a so-called 'Scargill surcharge'. This is what it will be called on our bills, and no secret will be made of the reason for the price increase.

The main item of extra cost in keeping the electricity supply going is the vastly increased use of oil at the power stations. City stockbrokers Laurie Milbank estimates that the four-fold increase in oil prices in recent months has cost the Central Electricity Generating Board an additional £25 million a week.

As far back as November it was reported that Treasury ministers were committed to raising the cost of electricity to help meet the cost of the coal dispute. To cover this, it's estimated that the average bill will have to rise by £75 this year. All-electric households will face a £50 increase.

The government has two motives for imposing this surcharge—not only to pay the massive bill incurred by its strikebreaking policy, but also to put across what the Chancellor believes is a valuable public message: that we have to pay for our miners' strikes. By distinguishing the surcharge from the rest of the bill, they hope to get public opinion on their side against the NUM.

We must organise against this surcharge. The price of electricity is already too high. This is not a Scargill surcharge, it's a Thatcher surcharge. It reflects how expensive electricity will become if the government's policy of less coal, more oil and nuclear power becomes a reality, and will cause many working people hardship. The postscript to that of Thatcher's monetarist policies.

A mass consumer boycott of this charge would turn the tables on the government if we can demonstrate the links between government policy and its effect on people's pockets. When the quarterly bills go out in April they can be met with an organised refusal to pay the surcharge. Community groups, tenants' and housing organisations, trade unions could all organise such a refusal, and a well-co-ordinated campaign could develop and spread across the country.

Demands that the Thatcher levy is scrapped!

The electricity for a one-bar fire for one week would cost £4.43 from Magnox nuclear stations but only £2.94 from coal-fired plant.

*N 1978/80 FIGURES

Our thanks

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